

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-10

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 ISO-00 SY-05 CPR-01 /029 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARP:COCECIL:CB
APPROVED BY NEA/ARP:JRCOUNTRYMAN
SY/PSB:TMAYS

-----310718Z 034208 /14

R 301620Z DEC 76
FM SECSTATE WASHDC
TO AMEMBASSY JIDDA
INFO AMEMBASSY LONDON

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: OVIP, SA

SUBJECT: ALLEGED VISIT OF PRINCE TURKI BIN ABDULAZIZ

REF: (A) STATE 308347 (B) JIDDA 8244 (C) JIDDA 8278

LONDON FOR KINSOLVING

1. FOLLOWING IS PROVIDED FOR YOUR BACKGROUND IN RESPONSE
REFTEL C. YOU MAY USE YOUR DISCRETION IN PASSING INFORMATION ON TO PRINCE TURKI'S OFFICE.

2. ON DECEMBER 10TH NEA/ARP WAS CONTACTED BY TELEPHONE BY A
MAN WHO IDENTIFIED HIMSELF AS MR. GEORGE CICCONE, WHO CLAIMED
TO BE A MEMBER OF THE PERSONAL STAFF OF PRINCE TURKI BIN
ABDULAZIZ, AND WHO STATED THAT THE PRINCE WOULD ARRIVE BEFORE
THE END OF THE MONTH ON A PRIVATE VISIT IN CALIFORNIA.
IN ANTICIPATION OF THE PRINCE'S ARRIVAL, MR. CICCONE INFORMED
US THAT NINE ARMED BODYGUARDS WERE IN CALIFORNIA TO PRO-
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VIDE SECURITY PROTECTION FOR THE PRINCE. MR. CICCONE STATED
THAT HE HAD ALSO CONTRACTED WITH A LOCAL PRIVATE DETECTIVE
AGENCY TO ASSIST IN MAINTAINING SECURITY FOR THE PRINCE
DURING HIS VISIT. OUR IMPRESSION WAS THAT OF THE NINE ARMED
BODYGUARDS, SOME WERE SAUDI CITIZENS, WHILE OTHERS WERE
PROVIDED BY THE LOCAL PRIVATE DETECTIVE AGENCY. MR. CICCONE

STATED THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD SHORTLY RECEIVE A TELEX MESSAGE FROM THE "SAUDI ARABIAN AMBASSADOR IN SWITZERLAND, SHEIKH SABBAN", THROUGH WHICH PRINCE TURKI WOULD PASS ENROUTE TO THE US, REQUESTING OUR ASSISTANCE AND FACILITATING HIS ARRIVAL AND HIS STAY. (SAUDI CHARGE AHMED MOUMINA BELIEVES THAT THERE IS A MR. SHAFIQ SABBAN RESIDENT IN GENEVA FOR LIAISON WITH THE UN.) CICCONE STATED THAT SINCE THE PRINCE WOULD BE TRAVELING THROUGH VARIOUS LOCAL POLICE JURISDICTIONS IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA, HE WANTED TO INSURE THAT THE BODYGUARDS WOULD HAVE NO DIFFICULTY IN CARRYING THEIR WEAPONS AND HOPED THAT THE STATE DEPARTMENT WOULD BE ABLE TO PAVE THE WAY BY CONTACTING THE NECESSARY POLICE JURISDICTIONS INVOLVED. NEA/ARP STATED THAT WE WOULD CONSULT WITH PROTOCOL AND SY TO SEE WHETHER IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO ASSIST. MR. CICCONE STATED THAT HE WAS STAYING AT THE HOME OF THE SON OF SHEIKH MOHAMMAD ALFARSI, AND STATED THAT EITHER THE FATHER OR THE SON WAS RELATED BY MARRIAGE TO PRINCE TURKI'S SISTER. SY ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT MR. CICCONE AT THE TELEPHONE NUMBER HE LEFT WITH US WERE UNSUCCESSFUL, BUT SY CONTACTS IN LOS ANGELES AREA INDICATED THAT CICCONE HAD MADE PREPARATIONS TO RENT TWELVE LIMOSINES IN WHICH RADIOS WERE TO BE INSTALLED TO ENABLE THE VEHICLES TO COMMUNICATE WITH ONE ANOTHER, HAD ARRANGED TO HAVE THE BODYGUARDS UNIFORMED, AND HAD ON HIS OWN APPROACHED SEVERAL LOCAL LAW ENFORCEMENT AGENCIES SEEKING THEIR COOPERATION.

3. ON SATURDAY, DECEMBER 11, SAUDI DESK OFFICER CECIL RECEIVED A CALL AT HOME FROM MR. CICCONE, INQUIRING ABOUT LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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WHAT ASSISTANCE THE STATE DEPARTMENT COULD GIVE ON THE VISIT. CECIL STATED THAT SY WOULD BE CONTACTING MR. CICCONE ON MONDAY MORNING TO DISCUSS HIS REQUEST, BUT CICCONE REPLIED THAT HE WOULD BE DEPARTING CALIFORNIA FOR LONDON ON MONDAY TO AWAIT THE ARRIVAL OF THE PRINCE. HE INDICATED THAT SOME OF THE AMERICAN BODYGUARDS WOULD FOLLOW HIM TO LONDON AS SOON AS THEY COULD OBTAIN PASSPORTS. A SHORT TIME LATER SOMEONE IDENTIFYING HIMSELF AS MR. SABBAN TELEPHONED DESK OFFICER'S RESIDENCE AND REQUESTED STATE DEPARTMENT ASSISTANCE "IN PROTECTING" THE PRINCE DURING HIS VISIT. CECIL REPLIED THAT SINCE VISIT WAS A PRIVATE ONE STATE DEPARTMENT ROLE LIKELY TO BE LIMITED, BUT THAT WE COULD BETTER JUDGE HOW WE COULD BE HELPFUL ONCE WE HAD FURTHER DETAILS ON PRINCE'S PLANS, TIME AND PLACE OF ARRIVAL, DURATION OF STAY, ETC. SABBAN STATED HE WOULD TELEX FOLLOWUP REQUEST BUT NONE HAS ARRIVED TO DATE. ADDITIONAL SY ATTEMPTS TO CONTACT CICCONE WERE AGAIN UNSUCCESSFUL.

4. ON TUESDAY, DECEMBER 14, ARP ASKED MOUMINA OF SAUDI

EMBASSY IF HE HAD ANY INFORMATION ON SUCH VISIT, TO WHICH HE REPLIED IN THE NEGATIVE. WE EXPRESSED WILLINGNESS TO COOPERATE INSOFAR AS POSSIBLE IN MAKING PRINCE TURKI'S VISIT A PLEASANT ONE BUT EXPRESSED CONCERN OVER ATTENTION ATTRACTED BY CICCONE'S "PREPARATIONS" IN SOUTHERN CALIFORNIA AND OVER UNUSUAL WAY IN WHICH DEPARTMENT'S ASSISTANCE HAD BEEN REQUESTED. MOUMINA PROMISED TO CHECK WITH SAUDI AMBASSADOR AND TO SEEK ADDITIONAL INFORMATION. DESK OFFICER INQUIRED EVENING OF SUNDAY, DECEMBER 19, AS TO RESULTS OF INQUIRY, AND WAS INFORMED BY MOUMINA THAT AMBASSADOR HAD NO KNOWLEDGE OF RUMORED VISIT AND HAD DECIDED THAT SINCE IT WAS APPARENTLY TO BE A PRIVATE ONE, EMBASSY WOULD MAKE NO INQUIRIES. ON DECEMBER 29 WE RELAYED SUBSTANCE OF REF-TEL C TO MOUMINA, WHO REPLIED THAT EMBASSY HAD STILL RECEIVED NO INDICATION VISIT WOULD TAKE PLACE. ARP CALLS TO LOS ANGELES NUMBER LEFT BY CICCONE HAVE BEEN UNANSWERED. LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: n/a
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 30 DEC 1976
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: saccheem
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1976STATE313316
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: COCECIL:CB
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: N/A
Errors: N/A
Film Number: D770001-0261
From: STATE
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1976/newtext/t1976123/aaaaacay.tel
Line Count: 141
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM
Office: ORIGIN NEA
Original Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators: n/a
Previous Classification: LIMITED OFFICIAL USE
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: 77 STATE 308347, 77 JIDDA 8244, 77 JIDDA 8278
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: saccheem
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 17 MAY 2004
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <17 MAY 2004 by woolflhd>; APPROVED <02 SEP 2004 by saccheem>
Review Markings:

Margaret P. Grafeld
Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
04 MAY 2006

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: ALLEGED VISIT OF PRINCE TURKI BIN ABDULAZIZ
TAGS: OVIP, SA, US, (TURKI, PRINCE)
To: JIDDA
Type: TE
Markings: Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 04 MAY 2006